

# THE WILSON BULLETIN.

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Edited by **LYNDS JONES.**

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## EDITORIAL.

The editor has received clippings from numerous papers which indicate clearly that there are many alert students who are doing good service in their own localities. It is not always possible to acknowledge receipt of such remembrances, but the sender may be certain that the editor appreciates these tokens, and is always pleased to receive them.

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The field work which is just now suffering to be done is that relating to the life of the birds. There is no lack of systematists and bibliographers and students of color patterns, all of whom have their places in any study of the birds, and there are hosts of those who enjoy the birds and are enthusiastic in their quest for new fields where new forms may be added to their acquaintance list. but the dearth of those who are making a careful and systematic study of the life of even a single species is all too apparent. The blanks which accompany this number are an earnest appeal to all to enter this field even though your foot never leaves the margin. It is a broad field, and no one can hope to cover all of it, but to be discouraged by its breadth would be like refusing to taste of the delicious strawberries in a large field because you could not hope to eat all of them! The pleasures to be found in this field of bird study are just as certain as any, and promise larger returns.

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The flight of Snowy Owls, which has reached considerable proportions in the eastern and middle sections of the country during the past winter, when taken in connection with the phenomenally warm, snow-free winter, assumes a character of great significance.

It is also true that in most sections of the country there has been a dearth of bird life in general which has caused universal remark. Speaking for northern Ohio, I have been unable to discover any unusual food conditions which might explain the appearance of the owls or the scarcity of other birds. No doubt the influx of owls was but an unusually marked symptom of a similar southward movement of practically all birds which habitually spend the winter months in ice bound parts of the country. If all indications are not deceptive on this point we shall have to look again for the explanation of these southward flights. It is interesting to notice that these southward flights of the Snowy Owl, the Hawk Owl, the Pine Grosbeak, the Redpoll, and the White-winged Cross-bill, not to prolong the list, do not seem to have any connection with each other. In other words, the influences which seem to be acting upon one of these species to bring about a southward winter movement many not affect the others at all. Reports from southern Ontario indicate that there has been no unusual movement of the owls there the past winter, while at places a hundred or more miles south of Ontario the number of specimens captured and seen was sufficient to cause general remark. Were the conditions in northern Ontario, or even farther north, particularly unfavorable for passing the winter, or were the central districts into which the birds passed unusually favorable, or were both of these influences combined? It is an enticing subject for practical field work. Its solution is entirely possible.

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## GENERAL NOTES.

A VULTURE PIE.—Of all the gastronomic stunts performed, the record was completely shattered in this county last summer. A resident of Atglen, possessing much better marksmanship than judgment, and no respect at all for some of the laws of the commonwealth, came into town with a mixed bunch of birds, the largest a specimen of the Turkey Vulture. Being utterly worthless to him he very kindly (?) presented them to an Italian working on the "Low Grade Freight Line." The dago proudly carried the string to his boarding house shanty. The Vulture, being the largest, was naturally considered the prize, so it was cleaned, and stuffed with plenty of garlic, and the entire household proceeded to make a meal of it; with the result that all were made deathly sick. The next day one of the participants gravely observed to the donor: "Big bird no good!" He didn't seem to appreciate his blessings!

FRANK L. BURNS, Berwyn, Pa.

RED-THROATED LOON AT GRASSY SOUND, N. J.—A most interesting New Jersey record is that of a Red-throated Loon (*Urinator lum-*